

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

In the Final Rejection mailed September 25, 2007: claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement; claims 7, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hosokawa et al. '398 in view of Burton; and claims 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hosokawa et al. '398 in view of Burton, and Hosokawa et al. '811.

On December 19, 2007, a telephonic interview was conducted with Examiner Lee to discuss the above rejections. The courtesies extended by Examiner Lee in granting and conducting this interview are greatly appreciated.

Initially, during this interview, Applicants' undersigned representative proposed to address the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, rejection by in claim 7 substituting the phrase --when high pressure is not applied to said lip part-- for the phrase-- "under a non-pressure condition", since the former phrase more literally recites that which is found in the paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15 of the original specification. Examiner Lee made no indication as to whether this amendment would overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, rejection, but said that it would be considered upon the filing of a response.

Accordingly, in reply to the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, rejection, based on the limitation "formed as to extend linearly under a non-pressure condition" not being supported in the specification, it is respectfully submitted that the meaning of this limitation is fully supported in the paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15 of the original specification, whereby this rejection should be withdrawn. In any event, claim 7 has been amended to recite that the lip part is to extend linearly --when high pressure is not applied to said lip part--, so as to more literally recite that which is found in the paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15 of the original specification. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, rejection should not be maintained.

Next during the interview was discussed the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection. Specifically, Applicants' undersigned representative proposed to amend claim 7 by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 8, and explained why claim 7 amended in such a manner is allowable over the relied-upon references.

In this regard, in rejecting claim 8, a combination of Hosokawa et al. '398, Burton and Hosokawa et al. '811 was relied upon, with Hosokawa et al. '811 being said to disclose that a value of $(D1-D0)/D1$ falls within 7%, wherein D0 is an inner diameter of tip end portion 27 of lip part 13b, and wherein D1 is an outer diameter of a shaft. However, as explained by Applicants' undersigned representative, the 7% discussed in column 17, lines 16-26 of this reference pertains to a **clearance** between the tip end portion 27 and the shaft 32 as shown in Fig. 27A. To the contrary, it was pointed out by Applicants' undersigned representative that the ratio recited in claim 8 pertains to an **interference** between the end of the lip part and the shaft, as shown in Fig. 4A of the instant application. In other words, claim 8 requires the diameter of the end of the lip part to be less than the diameter of the shaft, whereas in Hosokawa et al. '811, the diameter of the end of the lip part is greater than the diameter of the shaft.

Examiner Lee agreed that the size relationship between the lip part and the shaft as shown in Fig. 27A of Hosokawa et al. '811 is different from that as shown in Fig. 4A of the instant specification, and expressed that further consideration will be given upon the filing of a response.


Accordingly, in reply to the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection, claim 7 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 8, claims 8 and 12-14 have been canceled, and claims 9 and 11 have been amended to change their dependencies. Currently amended claim 7 is allowable for the reasons discussed during the interview.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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December 21, 2007